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16 March 2016

## The Fullness - Part II

While Paul was concerned for his fellow countrymen, he saw hope for them in the future, as will become more apparent in these next two chapters. **Romans 10:1-4:** *1. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for (L) Israel is that they might be saved. 2. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge <sup>(g1922)</sup>. 3. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4. For Christ is the end (objective) of the law for righteousness to every one who believes (cf Gal 3:21-26).*

The Greek word *epignosis* <sup>(g1922)</sup> indicates much more than just an intellectual knowledge. It is a *clear, full, precise knowledge*. The Jews know about God and have a zeal for God, but do not have a *clear, full knowledge* of God's righteousness. As an example, in the early church there were some believing Jews who demanded that the Gentiles keep the law (cf Acts 15:5). Concerning the spirituality of the law, Paul said of the feast of Unleavened Bread, clean out thoroughly the old leaven (Mt 16:11-12) and keep the feast with the unleavened bread of truth. So how are we to know what to believe, unless we search the scriptures for ourselves? Paul said of the Jews in Berea, *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so* (Acts 17:10-11).

**Romans 10:14-16:** *14. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15. And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah said, Lord, who has believed our report (Isa 53:1)? Part of Isaiah 53:1 was quoted in verse 16. Here it is from Young's: *Who hath given credence to that which we heard?* To summarize, Paul is saying that we must seek and search for God with our whole heart (Jer 29:13; Acts 17:27), and look to Him to send someone to teach us. This requires us to be open to consider what others might teach so as not to miss a messenger of God (Heb 13:2). Throughout Israel's history God raised up prophets to benefit the people. But, more often than not, the prophets of God were rejected and false prophets set up (cf Jer 23:9-32). Consider now, the totality of the whole Christian church today. All profess to believe in the same God, and yet, there is vast differences in how various groups understand God.*

Jesus acknowledged that the Jews searched the scriptures, but would not come to him for life (Jn 5:39-40).

**Romans 10:17:** *17. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word <sup>(g4487)</sup> of God. 18. But I say, Have they not heard? Faith comes when we receive into the heart that which is spoken by someone sent by God: ...*how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?* (Rom 10:14) Faith (i.e. understanding) comes by hearing someone speak the truth, and God impresses your heart (cf Acts 2:2-8) - yes or no. The process is repeated when you share it with another.*

**Romans 10:19-21:** *19. But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you (Dt 32:21). 20. But Isaiah is very bold, and said, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. 21. But to Israel*

he saith, *All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.* Indeed, Israel was provoked to jealousy by a foolish nation - the Gentiles (2Cor 9:2). Look at the verses quoted from Isaiah: **Isaiah 65:1-2:** *1. I Am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name. 2. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walk in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.* Those not called by God's name sought after Him, while Israel walked according to their own understanding, and went into idol worship. Years ago, when reading about the things Israel had done, I can remember thinking, "I will not do what they did because I have all this knowledge that they did not have." Now, I realize that back then I did not have a full, clear understanding of God's love either, and that I was guilty of crucifying Christ spiritually.

**Romans 11:1:** *I say then, Did God cast away His people? let it not be! for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin* (YLT). Though appearances today might make one think Israel is about to be completely wiped out, yet God has not deserted the people called by His name; Nor has God deserted the sincere followers among the gentiles. Paul goes on to explain what happened to the Jews:

**Romans 11:2-12:** *2. God has not cast away his people which he foreknew. know you not what the scripture says of Elijah? how he made intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3. Lord, they have killed your prophets, and dug down your altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4. But what was the answer of God to him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 7. What then? (L) Israel has not obtained that which he seeks; but the election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8. According as it is written, God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day. 9. And David said (in Ps 69:22-23), Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense (or, reward) unto them: 10. Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always (as slaves). 11. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall<sup>(g4098)</sup>? God forbid: but rather through their fall<sup>(g3900)</sup> salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. 12. Now if the fall<sup>(g3900)</sup> of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?*

The *election* in verse 7 refers back to the *remnant* in verse 5 who elected to accept the grace of God. Why would anyone not accept God's grace? The Jews thought that they had received God's favor. Yet the Psalmist said "the table from which they eat is a snare." They fell<sup>(g4098)</sup> because they stumbled over the cornerstone - Jesus Christ, which fault<sup>(g3900)</sup>, or trespass, caused the riches to be given to the Gentiles.

I often hear the phrase, "We are saved by grace alone." The Bible actually says, *For by grace are ye saved through faith* (Eph 2:8): i.e. For by God's love are we saved through Christ's understanding of that love. **Luke 6:31-32:** (YLT) *31. and as ye wish that men may do to you, do ye also to them in like manner; 32. and - if ye love those loving you, what grace have you? for also the sinful love those loving them...* Young is the only one that correctly translates the Greek word rendered as "thank<sup>(g5485)</sup>," which is repeated in verses 33 & 34.

The riches of the Gentiles are a result of the fall of the Jews. Verse 12 implies that those riches result in a fulness for the Gentiles first, and for the Jews in the future. This will be covered in more detail in the next part of the study. Until then, let us think on the Lord: *You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore* (NKJV). Amen.